

# Marine Safety Newsletter

US Coast Guard Marine Safety and Environmental Protection Directorate

## Operation Safe Catch is Saving Lives

Commercial fishing continues to rank at the top of hazardous occupations in the United States and approximately 80 people die nationally each year while conducting commercial fishing operations, thus the implementation of Operation Safe Catch.

Operation Safe Catch, which only applies to the Atlantic and Gulf coasts was started in December of 1999 and is to continue until May 31, 2000. It was developed to improve commercial fishing vessel safety and prevent loss of life and property at sea. Since its implementation seven lives have been lost, as compared to 22 lives lost last year during the same period.

During Operation Safe Catch, Coast Guard at-sea boarding teams will ensure compliance of regulations by



checking critical items on commercial fishing vessels. These items will include immersions suits, survival craft, storage of safety gear, distress signals, emergency position indicating radio beacons (EPIRB), fire extinguishers, high water alarms, water tight integrity, damaged or broken hoses, stability consideration and vessel overloading.

The Coast Guard has been focusing on "high risk" vessels, which are vessels in poor condition; have inadequate safety equipment; have a history of repeated search and rescue interventions; or engage in higher risk fishery operations such as winter season fisheries or clamming vessels that operate far from shore.

Marine Safety Offices in the Southeast U.S. have even

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The *Marine Safety Newsletter* is published by the USCG Marine Safety and Environmental Protection Directorate to collect and disseminate information of general interest to the maritime community. The monthly newsletter prints abstracts of major USCG rulemakings, studies, special projects, and related events. Articles from non-Coast Guard sources may not represent USCG policy or views.

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**\*\*Due to budgetary cuts, a complete and updated list of the G-M Studies, G-M Regulatory Projects, and Calendar of Events will not be printed, but are posted separately online.**

**[www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/gmhome.htm](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/gmhome.htm)**

## April 2000



implemented a voluntary fishing vessel dockside exam program where a vessel owner/operator can have a complete safety exam conducted on all safety equipment without the fear of a citation or penalty. Vessels that successfully complete this exam will receive a decal showing that it is in compliance with the required standards. Coast Guard at-sea boarding parties will not board ships with such decals.

While Operation Safe Catch is the Atlantic's most recent and visible effort, it is only one of several initiatives that the Coast Guard is undertaking in an attempt to improve commercial fishing vessel safety. Other initiatives include holding listening sessions with fishermen throughout the country, more in-depth training for Coast Guard boarding officers with respect to material conditions on board fishing vessels, and encouraging vessels to receive dockside exams before going to sea.

For persons interested in sending comments for review in conjunction with the listening sessions, please send your written comments to: Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street SW.; Washington, DC 20590-0001 or fax to Docket Management Facility at (202) 493-2251. Comments can also be sent electronically through the Docket Management Web site: <http://dms.dot.gov>. The comment period closes on July 30, 2000.

## White House Seeks Coral Reef Protection

The Clinton administration has proposed a campaign to set aside one-fifth of America's coral reefs as ecological reserves, thus banning fishing and other marine activities along the protected reefs.

Environmentalists say that two-thirds of the 8,600 square miles of U.S. coral reefs are at risk from overfishing, pollution, and commercial activities. The goal of the plan is to give at least 20 percent of the reefs protection as ecological reserves by 2010 to ensure that they are replenished.

The plan will be coordinated with state officials and territorial agencies. Together they will develop a scientific consensus to decide what areas should be set aside as ecological reserves where activities considered to be disruptive to coral life would be banned.

Fishermen, both commercial and recreational, have been concerned about the fishing bans and

some recreational fishing interests have suggested fish-and-release policies in the protected areas. However, marine biologists said that such policy would still be harmful to the coral and the many species that are found within the reef's ecosystem.

### Why protect America's coral reefs?

The coral reef is one of the most diverse ecosystems on our planet, and is comparable to, if not more diverse than the tropical rain forests. Living examples from nearly every group of organisms representing a billion years of evolution can be found within a coral reef, however, it is an extremely fragile environment.



Coral reefs provide:

- Protection of our shorelines by breaking waves
- Nurseries for growing fish
- A protein source in coastal people's diets
- Food, shelter, and protection to a variety of marine species
- Jobs through fishing and tourism
- A source of medicine against a variety of illnesses

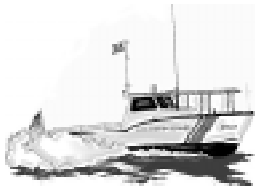
## BAC to be Lowered for Boaters

The Coast Guard proposes to revise the Federal Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) standard under which a recreational vessel operator would be considered legally intoxicated.

The proposed rule would lower the current BAC from .10 to .08. The rule would also replace the term "intoxicated," with "under the influence of alcohol or dangerous drug," bringing the regulations into conformance with current statutory language.



Statistics show that alcohol use remains a significant cause of recreational boating accidents. Since 1986, 27 percent of all boating deaths involved alcohol.



## Supreme Court Strikes Down State Oil Tanker Standards

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously that states may not set safety and environmental standards for oil tankers that conflict with or supplement federal regulations.

The court said that the need for uniform federal regulations outweighs the states' interest in protecting their shores from oil spills.

The decision reversed a unanimous 1998 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that said states can enforce their own maritime laws.



However, The Supreme Court wrote that the state of Washington may regulate its own ports and waterways so long as the rules are based on, "peculiarities of local waters," such as water depths and traffic patterns, which do not conflict with federal rules.

The Supreme Court did rule that the states may impose fines and other sanctions for actual spills.

The federal rules are much less stringent in some cases, but ultimately, the Supreme Court decided that the authority of the federal government must supercede states' wishes.

## Ship Structures for the New Millennium

The American Society of Naval Engineers, the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers and the interagency Ship Structure Committee is sponsoring a symposium entitled "Ship Structures for the New Millennium: Supporting *Quality in Shipbuilding*."

Areas of interest that will be discussed are reliability/risk methodologies, crashworthiness of ship structures, incorporating the role of the human element in ship design and emerging opportunities.

The symposium will be held June 13-14, 2000 at the Doubletree Hotel, Pentagon City in Arlington, VA. Registration is due by May 31, 2000 and is also available on the Web site: [www.shipstructure.org](http://www.shipstructure.org). Please make pamphlet requests to Ms. Jeannette Delaney, Ship Structure Committee, Washington, DC 20593-0001, Tel.: (202) 267-0003, Fax: (202) 267-4816, e-mail: [jdelaney@comdt.uscg.mil](mailto:jdelaney@comdt.uscg.mil)

## Pay Fines Via DOT Web Sites

The U.S. Department of Transportation now has Web sites that allow customers to pay fines, make payment for goods and services, receive applications for registration, and conduct other business via the Internet.



Customers may make payments with their credit cards in a secure on-line environment. As of now six Web sites may be accessed for such services with four others to be added in the near future. The U.S. Coast Guard is also establishing a site that can be accessed for licensing, examinations, vessel documentation, and fines.

For a list of current sites where payment of services can be made, see DOT Web sites listed below in **What's New on the World Wide Web**.

## WWW.



### What's New on the World Wide Web

[www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/gmhome.htm](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/gmhome.htm)

Update Nautical Charts

[www.nos.noaa.gov](http://www.nos.noaa.gov)

[www.maptech.com](http://www.maptech.com)

DOT Web sites:

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[www.fmcsa.dot.gov](http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov)

Office of Pipeline Safety and Office of Hazardous Materials Safety

<http://diy.dot.gov/pipeline>

<http://diy.dot.gov/hazmat>

Maritime Administration

<http://diy.dot.gov/marad>

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

<http://diy.dot.gov/nhtsa>

Federal Railroad Administration

<http://diy.dot.gov/fra>



## Coast Guard Releases “Top 10-Ready For Sea”

Coast Guard announces its “Top 10-Ready For Sea” safety list to help ensure commercial fishing vessels’ safety. This safety initiative expands focus from response and emergency equipment to prevention of accidents. The Coast Guard is distributing the check off list to fishermen through fishing associations and when boarding vessels.

### Top 10-Ready for Sea

#### **Weather:**

Evaluate the weather before getting underway and ensure that the vessel and crew can handle it. Many vessels founder when caught in weather that exceed their capabilities.

#### **Crew:**

A skilled and trained crew can get a vessel through rough weather and if the vessel does sink, they can operate the safety equipment. Crew training and rest is critical. Eighty percent of maritime accidents are attributable to human error.

**Stability:** Operators should ensure the catch and deck gear is properly secured, hatches are watertight, and the vessel is not overloaded. Operators should also ensure all scuppers and freeing ports are clear and should limit the accumulation of ice on their vessel.

**EPIRB and Communications:** Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon’s (EPIRB’s). EPIRB’s should be tested and properly armed. Also, carrying back up communications, such as a portable VHF radio or satellite phone, is strongly recommended.

#### **Immersion Suits:**

Crews must know how to don them, and should ensure that they fit properly, are in good condition, and are readily accessible before getting underway.

#### **Survival Craft:**

Carrying a properly serviced and installed life raft is not required for all vessels but is highly recommended.

#### **Personal Floatation Devices(PFDs) Worn on Deck:**

A safe vessel will adopt a policy of wearing PFDs, life vests, inflatable suspenders, etc. while on deck.

#### **Damage Control:**

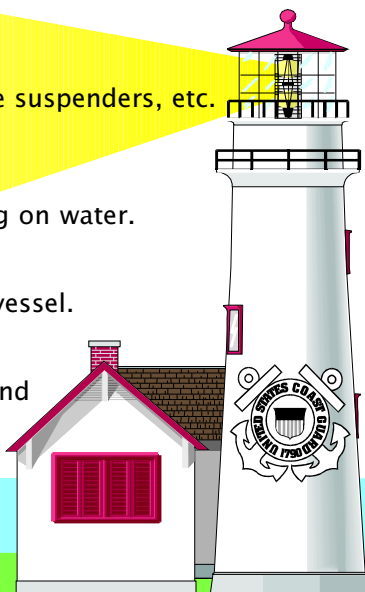
A damage control kit and skills in using it can stabilize a ship taking on water.

#### **Fire Fighting:**

Adequate fire extinguishers and training in fire fighting can save a vessel.

#### **Safety Exams:**

Before sailing, the vessel’s captain should conduct a deck walk and safety inspection to ensure that the vessel is “Ready for Sea.” The Coast Guard provides free safety exams that are highly recommended.





## IMO's Sub-Committee on Fire Protection

The Sub-Committee on Fire Protection, held its 44th session at IMO headquarters in London, under the chairmanship of Mr. K. Yoshida (Japan), on February 21–25, 2000. Major accomplishments of FP 44 were:

### **Final Agreement—Perfluorocarbons (PFCs)**

The sub-committee confirmed its agreement from the last session that there were no essential uses of PFCs, as proposed by the U.S. The subcommittee also confirmed the U.S. view that there are a variety of alternatives to PFC extinguishing agents. In accordance with the instructions of the Maritime Safety Committee and the Marine Environment Protection Committee, the subcommittee drafted language banning the use of PFCs in shipboard extinguishing systems, for approval by the committees.

### **Evacuation Analysis**

A working group developed a preliminary evacuation analysis methodology for high speed craft based on the ro-ro passenger ship evacuation analysis interim guidelines (MSC Circular 909). With respect to mega-cruise ships, the working group agreed that the same macroscopic methods developed for ro-ro ferries and high speed craft could be applied. Guidelines for these large passenger ships will be developed at the next session. The working group took note of an alternate methodology proposal by Germany, Norway, Sweden and Denmark on a microscopic computerized methodology. To continue this work on evacuation analysis and prepare to accomplish the next sessions' objectives, the sub-committee agreed to continue its correspondence group on this subject with Italy as chair.

### **Revisions-SOLAS Chapter II-2**

The new chapter allows the use of a performance-based design approach as an alternative to the prescriptive requirements in Chapter II-2. The sub-committee must complete guidelines on this methodology, and requested that the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) extend the completion date for this work until FP 45 in 2001. A working group will be established at the next session to finalize the work.

### **Interpretations-SOLAS Chapter II-2**

A working group considered several issues related to interpretations to Fire Test Procedures and SOLAS Chapter II-2, guidelines for carbon monoxide fire detectors, proposed amendments to Resolution A.602(15) and test procedures for fire retardant materials used for the construction

of lifeboats. The sub-committee agreed to draft interpretations to related fire test procedures and SOLAS Chapter II-2 for submission to MSC 72 for approval. Members were invited to submit their comments on additional draft interpretations related to test procedures and SOLAS Chapter II-2, guidelines for carbon monoxide detectors, test procedures for fire retardant materials used for the construction of lifeboats, and the need for comprehensive revision of resolution A.602(15) to the next session of the sub-committee.

### **Fire Detection and Fire Alarm Systems**

The sub-committee considered a U.S. proposal to require local alarms on fire detectors in passenger and crew cabins. Local alarms would give sleeping persons the quickest possible opportunity to escape a fire. Currently, alarms sound on the bridge and a crew member must be sent to investigate the alarm, raising the possibility that sleeping persons could die from the effects of smoke before they are found. Some delegations expressed concern about the cost of such a requirement, especially for retrofit. Although the matter was not scheduled for completion at this session, the sub-committee decided to end the discussion of the item without further consideration. This decision resulted from a narrow majority of members who spoke against further consideration.

### **Asbestos**

The sub-committee agreed that asbestos is not required for fire protection purposes on new ships and that further consideration of the uses of asbestos on ships should take place in the ship design and equipment subcommittee.

The sub-committee discussed the use of asbestos on ships and decided to report its discussions to the ship design and equipment subcommittee, which meets in April 2000, and will discuss asbestos in more detail. The sub-committee decided to consider its work on this issue complete.

### **Next Session**

The sub-committee unanimously re-elected Mr. K. Yoshida (Japan) as Chairman and elected Mr. J.C. Cubisino (Argentina) as the Vice-chairman for 2000. The 45<sup>th</sup> session of the sub-committee is tentatively scheduled for January 8–12, 2001.

For more complete information on this meeting and upcoming FP meetings, see the following Web site:

**[www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/MSE4/stdimofp.htm](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/MSE4/stdimofp.htm)**

The International Maritime Organization Corner better informs the maritime community about the vital work conducted through this international organization. The IMO Corner will present highlights of recently completed meetings, a calendar of IMO meetings, as well as a listing of supporting U.S. SOLAS Working Group meetings.

# Prevention Through People



## “What Does PTP Have in Common with Ocean Currents?”

We can not always see the currents of our oceans, but they affect a ship's course at sea. Mariners have long practiced the art of considering factors, such as currents, that are not visible to the human eye or concrete in description. With time, considering the effect of currents becomes second nature – it's automatic. This is why PTP has much in common with ocean currents: PTP can be present without actually being seen or heard, and in time, considering the effects of the human element will become second nature.

On March 7, 2000, the Commandant of the Coast Guard, Admiral James Loy, gave his annual *State of the Coast Guard Address*. Fellow Coast Guard members, guests, and public officials listened to his perspective on the past, present, and future state of the Coast Guard. Not one of these audience members heard the Commandant use the phrase Prevention Through People, but it was there throughout his speech. How is this possible? It is possible because PTP is accomplishing its goal. Human element issues are being incorporated into the nature of how we, the Coast Guard and other maritime community members, look at marine safety and environmental protection.

From the inception of PTP, honoring the mariner and taking a quality approach to solutions have remained two of its strongest guiding principles. This not only applies to the mariner within industry, but to the Coast Guard mariner as well. The Commandant addressed these principles.

Historically, in an effort to do the best job possible with limited personnel and resources, the Coast Guard spread itself thin to maintain all operations. However, limited personnel can potentially equate to safety hazards due to human element factors such as fatigue and training

shortfalls. The Commandant challenged that conventional mind set, stating “short-term pride in doing more with less comes at a price we shouldn't always be willing to pay.”

Throughout his speech, Admiral Loy gave examples about where he will incorporate this cultural change. One example was the shortage of qualified Surfmen for rescue boats. He acknowledged that proper training for this position requires many hours of on-the-job experience with both a properly rested trainee and trainer, but these training conditions were difficult to come by. To maintain regular operations, qualified Surfmen were evenly and unfortunately, sparsely spread throughout the districts. When Surfmen were low in numbers, the proper circumstance for optimum training was thwarted.

This cultural change will help turn that shortage around. The potential safety hazard in limited numbers of qualified Surfmen clearly involved the human element – so did the solution. Instead of dispersing qualified Surfmen throughout the districts, which spread them too thin and taxed their efforts, Surfmen are now being concentrated in the 13th District. In essence, the other districts will sacrifice operations for the short term so that the Thirteenth can support optimum training. In the long term, all districts will benefit because there will be enough qualified and well-trained Surfmen to go around.

Admiral Loy stated, “The cultural change works to help shape the future by challenging the mindsets that any operational mission is always more important than any training or maintenance requirement.” The PTP principles of taking a quality approach and honoring the mariner, including the Coast Guard mariner, is represented in this solution. Just as mariners automatically consider the ocean's current, so too will the maritime community automatically consider and apply the principles of Prevention Through People.

### PRINCIPLES

- Take a Quality Approach
- Honor the Mariner
- Seek Non-Regulatory Solutions
- Share Commitment
- Manage Risk

### VISION

To achieve the world's safest, most environmentally sound and cost-effective marine operations by emphasizing the role of people in preventing casualties and pollution.

### GOALS

- Know More
- Train More
- Do More
- Offer More
- Cooperate More

#### Contact us directly with your PTP story:

Commandant (G-MSE-1), U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, 2100 Second Street, SW, Washington, DC 20593-0001; (202) 267-2997; (202) 267-4816 Fax; e-mail: fldr-he@comdt.uscg.mil



# **NOTICE**

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**[www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/gmhome.htm](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/gmhome.htm)**

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National Maritime Center  
4200 Wilson Blvd. Suit 510  
Arlington, VA 22203-1804  
FAX: (202) 493- 1065

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**Deadlines**

- The Marine Safety Newsletter is published monthly on the 5th of each month.
- The deadline for articles, calendar events, and regulatory information is on the 25th of the previous month.
- Readers receive their copy of the *Marine Safety Newsletter* around the 15th of each month.

**Up to the Minute News**

Items missing the deadline for the *Marine Safety Newsletter* are posted on the World Wide Web at:

**[www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/gmhome.htm](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/gmhome.htm).**

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